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## Statement of Mike Mansfield - Bushness Memorial - Hartford, Conn.

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

Given at the Bushnell Memorial

Hartford, Connecticut

Friday, July 13, 1962, 9:00 P. M.

In less than four months the people of this state and the nation will vote in general Congressional elections. Local issues, personalities and whatever will be involved in these elections. But beyond all else -- let there be no doubt -- the Congressional contests are a test of public sentiment at mid-point in the Kennedy Administration.

The test means a great deal to us as Democrats and to our party. It means even more to us as Americans. For it is a crucial test which will determine for the next two and, perhaps, for the next half dozen years whether this nation will continue to move forward, stand still or slide backwards.

As Democrats, it is easy to vote for Democrats. But I like to believe, and I do believe that Democrats are moved by something more than passion for their party. I like to believe, and I do believe that the Kennedy Administration, a Democratic Congress and the Democratic Party have something more to offer the people of the United States than a label.



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Some of us are Democrats because we like the sound of the name. Some of us are Democrats because our fathers were Democrats. But we are all Democrats because we have the will to try to see the world and the nation as it is. We are all Democrats because we have the vision of a nation growing steadily in the strength, in the unity, in the equality and in the vigor of all its people in the years and decades to come. We are all Democrats because we would not turn back the clock even if we could.

Even in a partisan meeting of this kind, I think we have to recognize it is not only Democrats who can be described in these terms. There are others. But I do say that there is a significant difference between a Republican Administration and a Democratic Administration in Washington. I do say that there is a difference in a Republican-controlled and a Democratic-controlled Congress. I do say that any honest examination of the record of the eight years of the previous Administration and the year and a half of this Administration will reveal that difference. I do say that the principal difference lies in seeing today as it is and tomorrow as it is likely to be, of looking ahead rather than behind, of discerning what we have gained instead of bemoaning what we have not really lost. I do say that on a whole range of domestic questions the Kennedy Administration, with substantial Congressional support, has begun to move the nation off dead center. I do say that there has been a redoubled effort to strengthen both our security and the prospects for peace in the world. I do say we have



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made a beginning on meeting the accumulated social and economic needs of the people of the United States. For years, these needs -- these public needs -- had been neglected, ignored, hidden behind soap-opera smiles.

We are beginning to face them now. We will continue to face them, and we will act on them. The return to reality has begun. It is only a modest beginning which we have made, but it is a genuine beginning. And if the people of this nation will it, there will be more to come, much more, in the next two -- the next six years of leadership under John F. Kennedy. As citizens, even more than as Democrats, we have a responsibility to invite all Americans, of whatever inclination to vote their confidence in this advance and to accelerate it in the November election. We can extend that invitation by presenting to them Democratic candidates for Congress who believe in the President's program of national advance and who will work with him for its achievement.

You should know, in order that the people of this state and of the nation may know, some of the facts about the advance under President Kennedy, and how it contrasts with what went before. Let's start with unemployment. Nation-wide there are still several millions of Americans out of work. That has been the situation -- a little better, a little worse -- for many years. It happens to be a little better now, but in present circumstances, there is still inadequate assurance that it will not get worse again.



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Now, Republicans, no less than Democrats, know that it is not good for a man to be out of work and without resources. It is not good for the man, his family or the nation. Where, then, is the difference? The difference is that this Administration believes there is a public responsibility to act in that kind of a situation. It accepts that responsibility. The difference is that this Administration recognizes that no man will ever be really secure in his own work unless all men and women who are able and willing to work can find work. The difference is that this Administration does not hide its concern behind glowing statistics of progress which have no meaning for the man without a job or the man whose job doesn't pay enough for a minimum livelihood, or the man about to lose his job in the very process of progress. This Administration does not take refuge in the hope that vague, so-called natural economic forces will act to overcome these difficulties. It asks: what becomes of the man in the meantime? A question like that can only be answered by action. This Administration and a Democratic Congress have acted. We have acted to extend unemployment compensation insurance. We have provided aid to the dependents of the unemployed. We have increased minimum wages.

Yet, this Administration also recognizes that these measures -- the measures which so far have been adopted -- are largely in the nature of a stop-gap. These measures relieve some of the adverse effects of unemployment, but they do not get at the heart of this demoralizing



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problem. And it is at the heart of the problem of unemployment which we are aiming. Democrats aspire to an America of challenge, of vigor, of growth. In that kind of America there will be more than enough work to go around. In that kind of America, men and women of all ages who want to work will never know the fear or the actuality of being out of work through no fault of their own. We have a long way to go. This problem is not going to be met overnight, in a month, in a year. But I can assure you of one thing: I know that the President, a Democratic Congress and the Democratic Party are not going to rest content until it is met.

A beginning has been made on this long-term problem with respect to the depressed areas. These are the festering sores on the economic face of the nation. We are beginning to see action on these focal points of stagnation, after years of neglect. And we will see more action.

We will see action, too, stemming from the Manpower Training Act. If the Democratic leadership of the nation is determined not to leave areas in permanent depression, we most certainly are not going to leave men and women to vegetate in the backwash of rapidly changing patterns of industry, and in the increasing bypasses of the unskilled or surplus skilled by the spread of automation. This Administration has begun to probe in depth, for the first time, the full implications of that word automation. The President has labeled it the foremost challenge of our times and set the best brains he can find to work on it.



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Automation is a challenge which is as full of promise in the long run as it is ominous in the short run. As Democrats, we are determined that the benefits of this great advance -- and it is a great advance -- will be spread throughout the population and not just to a few. We are determined that the sacrifices, the human price of this advance, and, there is a heavy human price -- will be borne by all and not just by the man or woman who labors or who runs a small business for a livelihood.

There are other fields in which this Administration is trying and will continue to try to move the nation forward. In housing, we have acted, and we will continue to act to the end that decent shelter in city, town and country will be within the reach of all.

Here in Hartford you have lit a torch to light the way to solution of one of the most staggering problems of our years -- the decay of the nation's cities and the social dynamite which is buried in the decay. What is being done here, more and more, will be done elsewhere until cities are decent, attractive places in which to live.

In the extension and improvement of the highways and airways a Democratic Administration and Congress have acted and will continue to act to meet today's urgencies and to anticipate the needs of tomorrow. In developing the great natural resources of this country, in improving the supplies of water through pollution control, in setting aside large areas of our natural heritage of forest, river and coast for the



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recreation of the people, we have begun to act to meet the needs of today and tomorrow and will continue to act. In encouraging small business and helping to improve its competitive position we have acted and will continue to act because we believe small business is the leaven which keeps the economy of the nation flexible, creative and growing.

Insofar as big business and big labor are concerned, the actions of both have profound effect on the orderly growth of the nation's economy. This Administration has no quarrel with either. Nor will there be any quarrel, so long as both fulfill their responsibilities, not only to stockholders or members but to the nation. But it had better be clear once and for all that the President insists that no segment of this nation is greater than the whole -- greater than the people of the United States. The President is determined that public responsibilities shall be met. And I can tell you that the President is a very, very determined man when the interests of the entire nation are at stake.

Still ahead of us is the challenge to improve the educational structure of this nation from top to bottom. We will not rest content until every boy and girl has an opportunity to be schooled, in excellence, to the limits of their capacity and ambition, regardless of where they may happen to be born and regardless of family financial conditions. This improvement is essential to the security and continued progress of the nation. It is basic to the achievement of all the ideals of equal opportunity and equal justice which are our common heritage.



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Still with us -- and at this very moment the battle is being fought in the Senate with the outcome still in doubt -- is the struggle for decent hospitalization and related care for the older citizens of the nation. It is not that the other party does not recognize that people get old and get sick and frequently need expensive care which millions cannot afford. I do not know of anyone in public life who does not at least recognize that fact.

The difference is that this Administration, the Democratic Party and a few enlightened Republicans who have joined with us are determined to do what must be done to see to it that older citizens get that care as a matter of right and not of charity, that they get it essentially as they now get old age insurance. We are determined that they get it, not by chance, not by handout but with a dignity befitting Americans. The arguments against this concept are essentially the same as those which were advanced in the thirties against social security and by much the same people and by the same grand old party.

Yet, who would change social security now? Who would stop the flow of those hard-earned monthly retirement checks? Who would want to force millions of older citizens to go back to the good old days before Social Security? I can tell you that this Administration has no intention of going back to those days. This Administration is determined to move further away from them. It is determined to extend social security



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retirement insurance to cover hospitalization and related care to all older Americans. And, may I say that we would welcome a greater assist from Republicans in Congress, even as we welcome and appreciate the co-operation of the few who have worked closely with us. What we have gotten so far from most of them, however, is a confusion of the question. You know, and I know and the people of this nation know that the present social security system works and has worked well for almost a quarter of a century. A system of hospitalization for older people, built, essentially, around the same social security approach can work just as well. That is what the President wants and that is what the Democratic Leadership in Congress is trying to get.

We are trying to get it this year. The first test, in the Senate, will come next Tuesday. May I say that a distinguished citizen of this state, the former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, has set us an example of persistence in this matter which will stay with us until we have won the fight for decent care of older American citizens. The Secretary has fought day and night for this measure. He has argued, and he has compromised. But on one point he has not compromised and Democrats will not compromise. We insist on the principle of care for older citizens with dignity and by right and not care with reluctance or by chance or charity.



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These, then, are some of the facts that the voters of this state and the nation are entitled to have. These are the domestic issues -- the common sense issues -- which we have begun to face as a nation. Republicans in general stand on one side of them. Democrats in general stand on the other. And I do not have to tell you which is which. But I do have to tell you that without more Democrats in Congress -- Democrats who believe in the kind of America the President believes in, the kind of America we believe in -- a warm, vigorous, enlightened and dynamic America -- we are not going to dispose of these issues.

And if we fail to meet these issues -- these domestic issues -- in a way which strengthens and unifies the nation, we will pay a heavy price at home in the years ahead. We will pay it, too, in the impact of this failure on the nation's place in the world, in foreign policy.

This Administration is not building from scratch in foreign policy. It is building on what has gone before because foreign policy does not stop when one administration ends and another begins. An administration inherits, in foreign policy, all the mistakes as well as all the achievements of the administrations which have preceded it. Even if it is desirable, it is not easy to shift gears in foreign policy. It will not be simple to bring about changes. It will not be cheap. Foreign aid will have to go on. Tens of billions of dollars will continue to be spent each year for the armed forces. Billions more will go into space exploration.



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Most of this cost is the cost of cold war, the cost of the world's fears and anxieties. It is the price of the survival of freedom and the integrity of this nation in a time of world-wide upheaval, uncertainty, and hostility.

There is really only one way in which this costly expenditure of resources and energy can be significantly reduced and that is by the creation of a more stable world situation, a more secure peace. I can assure you that if any man can lead in the modification of the present situation, if any man has the wit and wisdom to lead towards stability and peace, it is the President of the United States, John F. Kennedy. He will need the support of an understanding Congress. He will need the patience and trust of all the American people, and if I know the people of this nation, he is getting it.

Even now, he is acting to rebuild our neglected relations in Latin America, and the extraordinary reception that he and Mrs. Kennedy recently received in Mexico augers well for the future. He is trying to hold the line in Asia and the achievement of peace in Laos -- a most difficult and significant achievement -- , if it can be consolidated, may yet open the possibility of greater stability for all of Southeast Asia. The President is still trying to come to some sort of sensible agreement on arms control without danger to national security. He is trying to defuse the dangerous situation in Berlin. And last, and perhaps most important, he is attempting to forge stronger links among the free nations of Europe



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and North America. A key element in this effort is a great enlargement in our international trade -- in order that the resources of farm, mine and factory which we have in such abundance can be sold abroad in return for what we can use from abroad. The legislative authority for the President has already cleared the House and I have every hope that it will clear the Senate. Some people may be hurt in this general process of increasing international trade, but this Administration is not going to let them bear the brunt of a change which will be of benefit to the entire nation. This Administration wants to proceed carefully and with understanding and with special consideration for those who might experience temporary difficulties. But we have all got to face the fact that we can't sell abroad if we are not ready to buy from abroad. We have all got to face the fact that a massive volume of international trade is now an integral part of our hope for our own economic stability and advance in the years to come and for a stable peaceful world.

I have tried to give you a picture of what your Democratic Administration and Democratic Congress have been trying to do in Washington. Take that picture to the voters of Connecticut and the nation in November. Take it to them in all honesty. We need have no fear of the people if they understand, in all honesty, what we are trying to do. Take it to them by selecting and supporting candidates who stand with the President. Do that, and they will put more men and women, enough men and women in Congress -- Democrats in Congress -- who will contribute in their own right and work with the President to accelerate the advance of the entire nation for the benefit of all its citizens.